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A  
LETTER

From the Reverend

Mr. *Charles Leslie,*

Concerning the

New SEPARATION.

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The THIRD EDITION.

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Mr. *LESLIE'S*  
**LETTER**

To Mr. *Bennet*

ABOUT

*The New Separation.*

DEAR SIR,



A *ST* Post brought me yours of the 20th. of last Month, wherein you desire to know my Sentiments concerning the New Separation, and say that others desire it too ; as you likewise told me in yours of *January* 27th, which I delay'd answering, in daily Expectation of those Books you told me were Printed there upon the Subject, and that I should soon have them, but they are not yet come to my hands, and can say nothing to them till I see them.

A

BUT

BUT that I may not go upon Misinformations, which easily may be supposed at this distance, and by verbal Accounts of Travellers, I have three Preliminaries to be informed in, before we come to the Merits of the Cause.

1. WHO made the Separation? Did they Separate from you, because you put Water in your Wine? Or did you Separate from them, because they did not?

2. BY what Authority was this done?

3. I would be glad to know the Steps and Measures were taken, and the reasonable Methods pursued in the Determination of the Synod, or Major Number of the Episcopal College.

WHEN I have a Certain, and Clear Information of these three Facts, I shall be able to give my Sentiments the better concerning the Points in dispute.

YOU say in yours of *January 27*. *I can never discommend any Priest for reviving an Old primitive Practise.* What of his own Head, without any Authority? and where: such Practise was not necessary? Suppose any Priest now should revive the Love-Feasts, and Holy-Kiss at the Sacrament, and administer it after Supper, and not in the Morning:  
and



and give it to Infants, and even to the Dead, which was forbidden in the third Council of *Carthage*, Can. 6. would you not discommend such a Priest? or if there were 20 of them, and 2 or 3 Bishops at the head of them, Who should break Communion with all, who should not Conform to them? You say in the same place, that *the late Dean Hicks told you, that when he came to Barking Church he found the Use of mixing Water with the Wine, which was mixt in the Vestry, not at the Altar, to be the Usage there, which he found had been the practice of Dr. Layfield in that Church, and he continued the same Manner of Celebration. But this made no Noise, Say you. No. Nor had it made any if it had been continued to this day, as they used it, that is, not to make it any Term of Communion, or force it upon others, as a thing Necessary, and Indispensible, and to refuse Communion with all other Churches (which were all in the Nation) who did celebrate the Communion according to the Established Liturgy of the National Church. There is a Case like this, which you will find in Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 5. c. 24. While the Contest about the Day of Easter was agitated,*

St. *Polycarp* Disciple of St. *John* the Apostle, who kept it according to the Jewish Computation, came to *Rome*, where it was kept on the Day now used in the *Western* Church, and discoursed the Matter with Pope *Anicetus*, and tho' neither could convince the other, yet they broke not Communion, or Friendship, but in Honour to *Polycarp*, *Anicetus* gave him the Consecrating of the Sacrament when he received with him in his own Church in *Rome*, and they parted in Christian Peace and Charity: but when furious *Victor* came in, he would give no Quarter, but fell to Excommunication presently; and he would Communicate with none, who kept not his Day, nor Communicate with them who kept their own: Whence a terrible Schism arose between the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches. And as you will see *Chap.* 23, both Sides pleaded Apostolical Tradition: So that this was not so very certain a Rule, even in those Early Days.

Old primitive Practice, meerly of it self alone, has no weight.

I have named some Practices of Christ himself, and of the Apostles, which have been taken away and altered in all Christian Churches. And if any Bishop or Priest

should revive them, and make a Separation upon that account, he would be censured as a Schismatick by the Discipline of all the Churches in the World. And Discipline it self is at least as ancient, and more necessary for the being of a Church, than any of those Alterations, which are carry'd on upon the ruin of all Discipline.

I know some sound Members of the Church of *England*, who always use Unleavened Bread at the Sacrament, where it may be had, but without Noise, or making Separation for it. And it has more foundation in the Passover and Institution of the Sacrament, than mixing Water with the Wine, of which there is not the least Tittle, or Tendency in any of the Gospels, or other parts of the New Testament, where the Institution is particularly recited, as *1 Cor. xi. 23. &c.* I mention this the rather, because I had a Letter from a principal Man of the Separation, letting me know that they have other things to press, or *wish for*, but that at present *no more is insisted upon*. So that we know not where it will end, and we may have next day Unleavened Bread, and the literal washing one anothers Feet, and we know not what, imposed upon Us as Articles of Faith

Faith, and necessary to Salvation; for we used to say, that less could not justify a Schism. *Sed quantum mutati ab illis!* Now every Priest may make a Schism, and tear the Body of Christ in pieces, and gather to himself, or Partners separate Congregations, opposite to the Communion of the Church, for every primitive Usage he can hear of, that has been left off, (and he ought in Modesty to suppose) for wise, and good Reasons; at least to suspend his Schism, till these are fairly, and thoroughly canvassed.

The Aggressor is answerable for the Bloodshed, on both sides; but he exhorts whom he attacks to be sure not to strike again, because it is the second blow makes the Quarrel: And it must, and shall be his way, for he hates Contention; And speaks much of Peace, Union, Christian Love, and Charity; And therefore tells Us, in great Condescension, *These are the Utmost Lengths for an Accommodation, we can offer, and which we earnestly desire may be received.* And what are these Lengths? the first is, to disown that Liturgy to which they themselves have given their unfeigned Assent, and Consent, and which has been Establish'd by all the Authority, Spiritual,  
and

and Temporal, in the Nation, and never to use it more, especially by no means the Communion Service, and that we have had no true Sacrament ( except at *Barkin* ) since the Reformation, for want of Water; and this by way of Bulwark against Popery; which tho' it uses Water, yet thinks it not Necessary. But we have got beyond it: But you say *neither do they think Episcopacy Necessary*. First, that is nothing to the Water. In the next place, none but Jesuits could tell you so; for indeed they were Enemies to Episcopacy *ab Origine*, and their General opposed it with his whole force at the Council of *Trent*, from whose Arguments our Protestant Jesuits the Presbyterians have borrowed their Artillery against it; but even that Council was too many for them, and forced the Pope ( whose Battles they fought ) to retreat with the best Face he could: And at this day (as well as formerly) the Right of the *Episcopat* is asserted strongly in *France* against the Encroachments of the Pope's Supremacy, and his present *Constitution*. Therefore trust not the Jesuits representation even of Popery, far less of Morality (Provincial Letters) or common Christianity.

OLD Mr. *Edw. Stephens*, whom you mention, I knew right well, he came often to me, and I took him to be an honest well-meaning Man of great Zeal, but weak Judgment, some thought him mad. He was enamour'd of *Primitive Usage*, right or wrong, a Flea leapt out of that Dust-Basket, which he died pursuing. He had heard that long ago, in times of hot Persecution, some Zealous Christians Communicated every day, not being sure of their Lives so long: And when they wandred thro' Woods and Desarts, they could carry a bit of Bread in their Pocket, when they could not carry Wine, they thought better to Communicate in one Kind than to lose both: a weak and superstitious Thought, no doubt: but the Imitation of it in times of Peace and Quietness, and to make the Practice of it Necessary and Universal, then, was most Ridiculous and Wicked; yet this was the Ground of the Daily and Solitary Masses enjoined on the Priest, and of taking the Cup from the Laity for ever. But the daily Communion struck Mr. *Stephens's* Fancy. Oh what a brave thing it would be to have Christians so prepared, so abstracted from the World, and disintangled from the Cares of it as well as from all  
Sin

Sin and Wickedness, to be always in such a Disposition and Frame of Mind as is required in those who come to the Holy Sacrament, with their Loyns girt; and their Lamps trimmed ready to meet the Bridegroom, at least in the Sacrament every day.

I remember I once discoursed this point with him at large; we were near the *Royal-Exchange*, into which I could look out of my Chamber Window, and I took my Topick from thence, seeing the Merchants running with great Earnestness into the Coffee-houses and Taverns to drive their Bargains, and I asked him whether he thought that such generally speaking, did not need some time of recollection and trimming the Lamp, before they approach'd the Holy Sacrament. And if daily Communion to such would not bring them into a Contempt, at least a less regard than was fitting of that Holy Ordinance, instead of encreasing their Esteem and Reverence for it; While they found themselves obliged to run from the Sacrament to the Tavern, or from the Tavern to the Sacrament; or otherwise neglect their Vocation and providing for their Families? which *St. Paul* pronounceth to be *denying the Faith, and worse*

*worse than Infidelity.* 1 Tim. v. 8. And Men may run into Superstition upon the Sacrament, as the Jews did upon the Sabbath; and as Christ said of the Sabbath, so may it be said of the Sacrament, that *it was made for Man and not Man for it*, and therefore that it does not interfere with Common Offices of Life.

Y O U say in yours of Jan. 27. *About 30 years my good and pious Friend, Mr. Edw. Stephens, set up the Practise of primitive and daily Celebration of the Christian Sacrifice; with an Emendation of the Liturgy: this he did without setting up a Principle of Separation from the Church, but only to mend and reform it; and for this he had the Encouragement and Prayers of all good Men, and a very comfortable Congregation of Communicants, that is, he set up a separate Congregation, but not upon a Principle of Separation. He is the Father of the New Separation, and they have not the Honour to have first Mended and Reformed the Liturgy. And his Fate may be a warning to them, for he had a Mind to be of some Church or Communion besides his own, and for that purpose he went to the Chaplains of a Popish Ambassador in London (I think it was of Portugal)* and



and desired to be admitted into the Communion of *Rome*, but they would not receive him; unless he would come up to their Terms, they would not go down to his, thinking him an Enthusiast: he told me again with Joy when a *Grecian* Arch-bishop of *Philippopoli* was in *England*, that he would try to be admitted by him into the Communion of the *Greek* Church, which struck his Fancy mightily, but as he told me afterwards, he tryed it, but was refused there too. And so lived a *Seeker*. And his Disciples of the New Separation are *seeking* still; for as I told you, they have *more things* to *wish for*, and we may expect will come out in the Commanding Strain, if what they have let go already meet with Success, for there is no stop in the Art of Imagination: nor can it want Fuel, while there is an old Book in the World that tells of Ancient Usages, and that we think our selves obliged to revive them all as necessary to Salvation, and then they are Articles of Faith, and it is a Sin not to observe them: and nothing can justify making a Schism in the Church but to avoid something that is sinful.

This has been a received Principle among Us, and warrants our Separation

from *Rome*, and condemns that of the Dissenters from Us.

BUT this justifiable Cause of Separation must be proved to be a Sin by clear and undoubted Authority, which the Scriptures only are. The Fathers pretended not to it, but wrote as we do, proving what they said from Scripture, and some of the greatest of them have wrote Retractions of their own Works.

2ly. We are not sure of their Works, for many spurious Books have been put out in their Names, and passed as theirs for a long time; many of which have been detected by the Labours of the Learned in these later Ages, but we cannot say, we are sure, that none remain, for they were found out, not all at once, but by degrees, and from time to time, and by intervening Accidents.

3ly. The Court of the *Index* at *Rome* assumes openly the Authority to mend and reform them, to put out, and put in what they think fit, to make them speak the modern Language, and are so little ashamed of it, that they have printed Volumes of these their Emendations of the Fathers, but we may be sure not all. Therefore no Word, Sentence, or Paragraph in any of the Fathers which have

have past thro' these Hucksters hands, can be depended upon as certain and indubitable, or can admit of any Argument beyond that of Probability: Which is too weak to build Articles of Faith upon, or determine the Necessaries to Salvation. If you say, this takes away the whole use of the Fathers. No, there are many excellent and instructive things in them; but we must refer them, as they referred themselves, to the Holy Scriptures, as the only sure Rule. Thus St. Paul referred himself, *be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ*, and no further does he desire. May we not then say the same to the Fathers? And of all Primitive Usages not warranted in Scripture? The communicating Infants in the Eucharist is a very ancient Usage, and is continued to this day in the Greek Church, as you may see in the Letter of *Jeremy*, Patriarch of *Constantinople* to the *Lutherans*, in *du Pin's* History of the Seventeenth Century. It is likewise used in the Church of the *Abyssines* and *Cophtits* of *Egypt*. And *Baptizing* for the *Dead*, has more Countenance in Scripture (1 Cor. xv. 29.) than *Praying* or making *Offerings* for them, has longer *Tradition*, and more *Primitive Usage*. And you may

may gratify some fanciful Friend of the Separation with letting him know that in the *Greek Church* they always warm the Water they mix with the Wine (and some say they mix it not till after the Consecration) and is not this curious? for the Water that is mixed with the Blood in an Human Body is certainly warm, and more nearly represents what came out of our Saviour's side. This may be kept *in Petto*, and *wished for*, till a proper time arise to make it the Ground of a New Separation.

BLESSED God! whither do we wander? having forsaken the *Fountain of living Water*, the sure *Word of God* for the Rule of our Faith, we have *bewed out to our selves broken Cisterns that can hold no Water*, Jer. 2. 13. the Customs and Traditions of Men. How rightly has St. *Augustine* judged, as if he had been speaking of our present Case, and to the *new Separation*, to bring them back again to the Holy Scriptures, *Quicquid inde audieritis hoc vobis bene sapiat: quicquid extra est, Respuite, ne erretis in Nebulâ.* (*de Pastor. cap. 11.*) And he says (*Ep. 42.*) That the Divine Scripture is not silent concerning those things which belong to true Religion, *quæ tamen pertinent ad veram Religionem quærendam & tenendam,*  
*divina*

*divina Scriptura non tacuit.* He was speaking of the Tradition which has descended down to Us of Actions done in former times, but he excepts that from being the Rule as to Religion, but the Scripture only, and wholly, because it is not silent in any thing pertaining to that, but contains plainly *all things* relating to *Faith* and *Morals*. *In iis quæ apertè in Scripturâ posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia quæ continent Fidem moresque vivendi.* (*de Doctrin. Christian. l. 2. c. 9.*) Oh! That it should be needful to quote any thing of this sort against a new Separation of some among our selves, who have so long suffered and fought with Us for the Holy Scriptures, the Church and the Constitution, against the Traditions of *Rome*, the Fund of all their Errors, as they were to the Jews, and made the Scriptures of none effect.

To understand which rightly, we must take care to distinguish betwixt the *Letter* and the *Spirit*, as the Scripture it self does distinguish: And that as well in the New Testament as the Old, as *St. Paul* says, *2 Cor. iii. 6. God hath made Us able Ministers of: the New Testament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit: for the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life:*  
the

the outward Institutions are the Letter, which were ordained to point out to Us the Inward and Spiritual things represented and exhibited by them, as Letters express in writing what they signify. But when Men stuck to the *Opus Operatum* of performing the Letter of the outward Institutions, and trusted in that, then were they Dung and Abominations before God, *Mal.ii. 3.* and hateful to Him. *Isai. i. 14.* Nay, he denied that he had commanded them. *Jer. vii. 22.* And when the Jews took Literally what Christ said concerning their Eating his Flesh and Drinking his Blood, he set them right, and instructed them in the true meaning of it, saying, *It is the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing: the Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life,* *Joh. vi. 63.* But there never was so fatal a sticking to the Letter as in this Case, that the *Hostia* or Bread of the Sacrament should be worshipped, not as a Symbole, Figure, or Representation of Christ, but as very *God* it self, and the Worship to terminate in it, and not to be relative or referring to any thing else. This is a *knowing Christ still after the Flesh*, which the Apostle reproves, *2 Cor. v. 16:* What then

then is our Dispute about mixing a little Water with the Wine, which has nothing of the *Spirit*, nor even of the *Letter* of the Gospel to warrant it? But against both some will follow an *Ancient Usage* (of which we cannot be sure for the Reasons before) which might have been in some places, and not in others, as it is at this day, and yet no breach of Communion upon that account, which never happened till this new Separation. But the Truth, the Reality is in the Spirit, which is only figured in the outward Institutions: for *the Law is Spiritual*, and *he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly*; neither is that *Circumcision, which is outward in the Flesh*: but *he is a Jew, who is one inwardly*; and *Circumcision is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose Praise is not of Men but of God*, Rom. ii. 28, 29. and Chap. vii. 14. and Baptism is called a *Figure*, not the putting away the filth of the *Flesh*, but the answer of a good Conscience towards God, 1 Pet. iii. 21. Not the outward Baptism or Washing of the Skin, but the Inward Baptism or Cleansing of the Heart of which the outward Baptism is but a *Figure*. And as the outward Sacraments of the Law and the

Gospel, Circumcision and Baptism, were not Instituted for their own sake, but to denote the Inward and Spiritual meaning of them; and as the Sacrifices under the Law were only Typical of the only true and real Sacrifice of *Christ* which alone could take away Sin: so the Institution of the *Lord's Supper* was *Figurative* too, of the *Spiritual Nourishment* of our *Souls* by *Faith* in what he did and suffered for us in the *Flesh*, as our *Bodies* are nourished by corporeal Food, as of Bread and Wine, which is the Benefit our Catechism teaches *whereof we are partakers in this Sacrament*. And if God has ordain'd outward things as *means* whereby we receive Spiritual Benefits, then ought they with Reverence to be attended; and not as the Quakers do, lay them quite aside, nay to vilify and spurn at them; God will not suffer his own Institutions to be despised.

The first Sin was the breach of an outward Institution in *Eating the forbidden Fruit*. God commanded the Man to be stoned who brake the Sabbath: and sought to kill *Moses* for neglecting to Circumcise his Son: He struck *Uzzah* dead upon the Spot for putting his hand to the Ark out of his own Order: and smote *Uzziah*



*zab* with Leprosie for invading the Priests Office: Fire came out from the Lord, and consumed 250 Levites, who mutinied against *Aaron* the High Priest; and he created a New thing and caused the Earth to open her Mouth and swallow *Corab*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, with their Wives, Children, and all that appertained to them, alive into the Pit, for their Rebellion against *Moses*: He slew 50000 and 70 *Bethshemites* for looking into the Ark, the outward Ark made of Wood, of little value in it self; but God will have his outward Institutions to be regarded, because they are his, and by this we shew our Reverence to him who commanded them.

And yet they are but the *Letter* or outward *Body* of Religion, the Inward and *Spiritual* part to which they refer is the *Soul* of Religion: and as the Separation of these in the Natural Man is Death, so when the Spirit and Soul of Religion is departed, it is quite Dead, and the Letter or Body of it is without Life, and a loathsome Carcass of Religion in the sight of God: therefore we must preserve the *outward* for the sake of the *Inward*, if we separate them, it is Death.

Yet this hinders not giving the Prefe-

rence by much to the *Inward*, to the *Soul* above the *Body*, to the *Spirit* above the *Letter*. And we need not be afraid that this will cool or lessen our Devotion at the Sacrament. No, on the contrary, it will raise and exalt it, for the more *Spiritually* we understand this Ordinance, we shall know it more truly, and approach it with greater Reverence and Attention; not feeding on the Shell instead of the Kernel, yet preserving the Shell with Care, as knowing that without the Shell the Kernel would not grow.

While we are in the *Body*, the Religion fitted for our Use is to consist of an Outward and Inward part, for it is our *reasonable Service* to present our *Bodies*, a living *Sacrifice*; *holy, acceptable unto God*. Rom. xii. 1. but the *Reason* is only in the *Soul*, which may present the *Body*, by which it becomes acceptable to God, but the *Body* cannot present the *Soul*, which is not at its Command, for it *profiteth nothing* of it self, nor otherwise than as it is acted by the *Soul*. Thus it is said of Christ, *Heb. ix. 14. who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without Spot to God*. The Merit was in the *Spirit*, without which the *Flesh* had profited nothing, even the same *Spirit* which Conceived Him in the *Womb* and wrought  
Mira-

Miracles by him, and raised Him again from the Dead, and ever liveth in Him to make Intercession for Us.

This Faith is the Food of Souls, and nourisheth Us unto Eternal Life: and in allusion to this, Christ calls Himself the *true Bread* and *Manna*, and says, *except ye Eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and Drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you.* Which He after explains to be all Spiritually meant, *Job. vi. 63.* but some taking it Literally, have brought in Communicating *Infants* and even the *Dead*, and all the Monstrous and Unworthy Cases in the *Rubrick of the Mass; de Defectibus in Celebratione Missarum occurrentibus*, where *de defectu vini*, it is said, that not to mix *Water* with it, is indeed a fault, but yet hinders not the Consecration, and that notwithstanding there be no *Water* with the Wine, *Conficitur Sacramentum*, it is a *true Sacrament*.

Now if I am not misinform'd (I hope I am) the New Separation will not allow even of this, but make the *Water* so Absolutely and Essentially Necessary, that without it ther is no *Sacrament* at all, and so we have had none ever since the *Reformation*. If this be so, they are greater Enemies to the Church of *England*, and at greater distance

stance from it, than *Rome* it self, and have need to be reformed back again to *Popery!* before they can pretend to be of the Church of *England*, or any part of the *Reformation*, or of any *Christian* Church, till they can shew one which dissolves the Sacrament for want of *Water*; or would admit them as Members upon these Principles; as well as assuming an Authority to mend and reform their Liturgies, (any two or three Bishops or Priests who please.) Is there any Church in the World, or any private Club of Men, who would admit such turbulent Members, as pretend a right to overturn all Discipline, Rule or Order, however settled, or for how long time soever continued! My Heart is grieved while I write this, but I hope your next will revive me, and let me know that I have been happily deceived in all these Facts which have been told me.

And that none will be found among you who will not submit to the Apostles Rule, *μη φεγεῖν*, not to be wise above that which is written, 1 Cor. iv. 6. and he gives the Cause for it, their being *puffed up one against another*; for Pride is the Foundation of all Heresies. Therefore, I say, (adds St. Paul) *to every Man that is among you, not to think*  
of

of himself more highly than he ought to think ; but to think soberly, Rom. xii. 3. This Humility and Sobriety of thinking would call to our Mind, in the present Dispute, that which is written, *Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a Lyar.* Prov. xxx. 6.

Who then are they that have added *Water* to the *Wine*, and made that Essential to Salvation, of which Christ spoke not one Word, and all the Scriptures are silent ? Silent in Essentials ! and where that silence is a Prohibition, it being the frequent stile of God in Scripture, *which I commanded not*, being equivalent to *which I forbid*. This was the *strange Fire* which *Nadab* and *Abihu* offered, for which *there went out Fire from the Lord, and devoured them*, Lev. x. 1, 2. And why was it *strange fire* ? because God had not commanded it. And why may we not worship the Host of Heaven ? because, says God, it is that *which I have not commanded*. And why may we not sacrifice our Children ? because, says he, *it is that which I commanded not, neither came it into my heart*, Jer. vii. 31. And again, *Which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my Mind*, Chap. xix. 5. What comes into his Mind he  
speaks

*speaks* in his Holy Scriptures, that is, as much of his Mind as he is pleased we should know, and be obliged to follow. But in what they are silent, and keep secret from us, we are not to inquire after, it belongs not to us, as it is said, *the Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are Reveal'd (in the Scriptures) belong unto Us, and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of this Law,* Deut. xxix. 29. Here was their whole Duty, and they were not to *Add to it or diminish from it*, Chap. iv. 2. Which shews the Rule to be compleat and perfect.

Now if it had come into the Mind of Christ to have *Water* mixed with the *Wine* in the Sacrament, especially if he had thought it Essentially necessary to Salvation ther can be no Doubt but he would have spoke of it; whereas now it is a thing *which he has not Comman-ded*, and therefore, in the Language of Scripture, has forbidden. At least if we be in an Error for this, it is certain we err on the safer side, while we precisely follow what he has Comman-ded; and they are in the greater Danger who have made a new Rule of Faith to them-selves



by the Inventions of Men, into vast Numbers of things, not only made *Needful* but *Necessary*? whence we become *careful and troubled about many things*, Luke x. 42. And he who can find out more Necessaries thinks himself an *able Minister* of the *New Testament*, but it is of the *Letter* that *killeth*, even without the *Letter*! which is properly *Superstition*, making things *Necessary* which God made not so, nor *spake*, nor *came into his Mind*. And whether is it easier to suppose that Christ neglected or forgot, or on purpose, conceal'd what was *Necessary* and *Essential* to our *Salvation*: or that *Justin* or *Cyprian*, or who else you please, might mistake, or their *Works* be corrupted by those who profess the *Trade*, and had them so many *Years* in their hands, with full *Leisure* and *Power* and *Inclination* to do it? Produce any *Book* of any *Father* which can shew those 8 *Evidences* for its being *True* and *Genuine*, which are given in *Christianity Demonstrated* for the *Holy Bible*. And till this be done, bring no more *Fathers* or *Ancient Usages* to corrupt the *Scriptures* by adding to them.

And tho' the *Name* of the whole *Catholick Church* is often given by particular



particular Churches for Customs and Usages of their own and neighbouring Churches, yet we must consider that this is next to impossible to know, especially in the early Ages when Navigation and Commerce were not so extended as now, that we may reasonably suppose there were then several Christian Churches which never had heard of one another, how then could these Fathers know the particular Customs and Usages of all these Churches? unless Angels were the Couriers, or a New Revelation given! And now even when we are much better acquainted with foreign Churches than the Ancients were or could be, how imperfect are our Accounts? Travellers differing in them. We hear of Christian Churches at this day where the Usage of *Circumcision* prevails, even of *Women* too, which no doubt they think *necessary*, else they would not do it, and they have their own *Tradition* for it, and old Books to support it. Which the Separation (as I am told) are now come to make Equal to the *written word of God*. And the only part of their Tradition as to the *fruit of the Vine*, meaning Wine mixed with Water, and the *fruit of the Tree*, meaning pure Wine,

is taken from the *Talmud*, the most lying, senseless and blasphemous Book ever written, as Mr. *Collier* gives Account in his Dictionary: It was wrote by the Jews about the middle of the Fifth Century after Christ, who were his most spiteful Enemies, and would not fail to do every thing they could to confound and distract the Christians: even by imposing upon them as to their own Usages and Phraseologies; as *Abendana* the Jew bit several of the Sages in *Oxford*, which they found out afterwards.

But suppose these had been in good earnest Jewish Traditions, and of long standing even before Christ came, he has condemned them all as a false Foundation of Faith or Doctrine, and a *Worshipping God in vain, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*---full well ye reject the Commandments of God, that ye may keep your own Tradition, Mark vii, 8, 9. 13. And this operates as strongly against Christian as Jewish Tradition: And to get rid of this Unexceptionable Authority against it, the Papists go to their Dictionaries, and finding that *Trado* signifies to give or deliver, they make every thing a Tradition that is delivered by Word or by Writing, or any other way

way ; like the Apothecary, who mistook a Wheel-barrow for the *Vehicle* in which he was ordered to give his *Physick*.

But every Body knows that *Tradition*, in the present Dispute, respects the Time as well as the *Conveyance* ; for the Jews derived their *Oral Traditions* from *Moses* as the Church of *Rome* from *Christ* or the *Apostles* ; to be deposited with the *Priests* or *Elders*, and convey'd down by *Word of mouth* : therefore these are called *the Traditions of the Elders*, against which our Saviour inveigh'd so severely, and *St. Peter* tells them of their *vain Conversation, received by Tradition from their Fathers*, 1 *Pet.* i. 18. And *St. Paul* describes the *Jews Religion* to consist chiefly in being *exceedingly Zealous of the Traditions of their Fathers*, *Gal.* i. 14. These are not the *Traditions* or *Ordinances* which he had delivered to them, whether by *Word* or *Writing*, 1 *Cor.* xi. ii. and 2 *Thes.* ii. 15. because these had cast no descent, nor had they received them from their *Fathers*, and nothing else is called *Tradition* in our present Dispute, nothing but what is *old* and come down to *Us* for many *Generations* : Nothing is called *Tradition*, in this sense, at its beginning,  
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or during the Life of him who first set it up: if we hear a Man preach a new Doctrine, we call it his Doctrine, but not his Traditions: And if we should call it *Tradition* (according to the Etymology of the Word) because it was *delivered* in such a Sermon or Discourse, and apply this as a proof of the Ancient Traditions received from our Fathers of a long time before we were born, it would be so senseless a Prevarication, and childish playing with Words as could deceive no Man of common Sense: And therefore we may be sure that the Apostle when he spoke of the Traditions he himself deliverd, he did not mean those old Traditions of the Fathers about which only is our Dispute.

AND yet this is all the Countenance from Scripture which *Rome* or her Disciples of the *New Separation* have to plead for their Tradition: And for this Reason they have, both of them, rejected the Scriptures from being a Rule.

BUT the Separation has far exceeded; for neither the Church of the *Jews*,  
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nor that of *Rome* at this day, stretch their *Traditions* further than as *Comments* or *Interpretations* of *Scripture*, and therefore must have a *Foundation* in *Scripture*: Thus the *Traditions* of *Corban* was brought as an *Interpretation* of the *fifth Commandment*, tho' it made it of *none Effect*, *Mark* vii. 11, 12, 13. And *many such like things they did*, as the *Church of Rome* after them. But yet she had the *Modesty* not to *Impose* her *Traditional* adding *Water* to the *Wine* as a thing *Necessary*, but has declared the *Sacrament* to be *valid* without it: Whereas the *Separation* has advanced further, and made it *Necessary* and *Absolutely* so, and the want of it to null the *Sacrament*: thinking by this *Rigour* to frighten at least *Women* and *Children* into their *Party*, as the *Romans* do by threatening *Damnation* to all others! which shews only their own utter want of *Charity*, which is greater than *Faith* it self, ( *1 Cor.* xiii. 13. ) And without which there can be no true *Faith*, and consequently no true *Church*: And the *Separation* has gone further in this than *Rome* it self, by making other things *necessary* to *Salvation* which *Rome* has not done, and given *Tradition* a larger scope.

scope. So that in every thing wherein the Church of *Rome* has rendred her self most odious, this *New Separation* has made themselves more so.

*Bellarmin* struggles hard for the *Traditions* of the *Jews*, which our Saviour reprehended, and says in Answer (*de verbo Dei non scripto*, lib. vi. c. x.) That Christ did not reprehend the Traditions of *Moses*, and that Christ did not say they were the Traditions of *Moses*. No, he knew they were not, but the Church of the *Jews* called them so, and as such deliver'd them to the People; And he says, *hic damnantur Traditiones*---Here those Traditions are condemned, which the *Jews* boasted to have received from *Moses* and the *Prophets*. But he supposes those Traditions which our Saviour condemned to be those only which were made by some of their *Rabbies*, *paulò ante Ortum Salvatoris*, a little while before the coming of Christ, and *initium habuisse*, to have had no earlier a beginning: but of this he offers no sort of Proof: And if these Traditions had begun but a little time before our Saviour, it is more than probable their beginning might have been remembered, and then they would not have been

been call'd the Traditions of the *Elders*, received from their *Fathers*, nor would they have boasted that they came from *Moses* and the *Prophets*: or will any grant that such New-coyned Traditions could be put upon the people as received from the very beginning of their Religion? If this can be supposed, it will render all Tradition Uncertain, and we know not when it deceives us. *Bellarmin* was forced to this vain Supposition to save the Infallibility of the Church, then only with the Jews, or if he could not quite save it, yet to make her Fallibility continue as short a time as he could; not considering that the Pretence to Infallibility failing but one day, falls for good and all; And his own Supposition, altogether groundless, makes the Error to have continued so long as to gain the Name of Tradition, and its beginning to be forgot. But our Saviour makes it plain past answering, when reprehending these Traditions, *Matt. xv. 7*. He quotes *Isaiab* for them, who was more than *paulo ante*, a little while before our Saviour; and *Isaiab* in the place quoted, Chap. xxix. 13 speaks of these Traditions as of long standing before him,

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and calls them *Precepts of Men*, which therefore could not be the Ground of our Faith, nor ought to be taught as *Doctrines of God*, for thus our Saviour applies it.

Bellarmin (*ibid. cap. xi.*) sets down an Objection against their beloved topick of making the Preaching of Christ and the Apostles to be *Tradition* in their own time, it is from *Irenæus*. ( *lib. 3. c. 1.* ) where he says, *Non enim per alios*---That we have not known the *Œconomy* of our Salvation from any others than those by whom the Gospel is come to us. And that what they ( the Apostles ) then preached, they afterwards, by the Will of God, gave to us in Writing, to be the Foundation and Pillar of our Faith: to which says Bel- larmin, *cum Irenæus ait*---When *Irenæus* says, that the Apostles wrote what they preached in the World, is true, but not against Traditions, because they did not preach to the People all things, but only those things which were Necessary or Useful to them. ( *Quæ illis Necessaria vel Utilia erant* ) but other things they delivered apart to those that were more perfect: About which we are not concern'd, while all things Necessary or Useful to us are contained in the *Scripture*



ture, without recourse to *Traditions*. *Ille Omnia*, as St. *Augustine* says, *all those things which relate to Faith or Manners*, that is, says *Bellarmin*, (*ibid.*) *those things which are Necessary to all, such as are contain'd in the Apostles Creed, and the Decalogue*. To which small compass all *Necessaries* are reduced by *Bellarmin*. I suppose he meant things *Absolutely* so, that without them we cannot be saved. Which the Sacraments themselves are not, as our Catechism cautiously words it, that they are *Generally Necessary*, but not so that if any Man were in such Circumstances that he could not possibly have them, suppose for his whole Life, his Soul should be lost for what was not in his power to help. God forbid! The *outward Institution* it self is but a *Figure* of the *True*, which is the *Spirit*, that only giveth *Life*.

Therefore it is declared in the *Rubrick* of the *Communion of the Sick*, that if through any just *Impediment* the *Sick* do not receive the *Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood*, the *Curate* shall instruct him, that if he do truly Repent him of his sins, and Steadfastly Believe that *Jesus Christ* hath suffered upon the *Cross* for him, and shed his

*Blood for his Redemption, earnestly remembering the Benefits he hath thereby, he doth Eat and Drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his Souls health, altho' he do not receive the Sacrament with his Mouth.* But this I hear is expunged in the *Communion Office* printed by the Separation; it was too Spiritual for them, and led Mens Thoughts too much to the true Intent and Meaning of the Institution, and which only makes it acceptable to God, and without which it is Dung and Abomination in his sight, a dead Carcass of Religion.

And yet these Ministers of the *Letter* will not stick to the *Letter*, but add to it from some *Old Traditions*: and make these *Necessary*, absolutely *Necessary*, to our Salvation! And where Christ speaks of Spiritual Eating or Nourishment, *Job. vi. 53.* and tells us so, *ver. 63.* yet some will take it according to the *Letter*, and thence infer that this is *necessary* to *Infants*, who cannot eat Bread, and even as Nourishment to the *Dead*. Which Practice was forbid, and therefore continued, within a very few years of the beginning of the Fourth Century; for then the Third Council of  
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*Carthage* sat, and they would not forbid a Practice, if ther had been no such Practice. And I observe that the Council discharged this Practice without any regard to the long *Tradition* upon which it stood, but purely upon the Reason of the thing; for this is the Reason given, *Can. 6. Dictum est enim* ---for the Lord said, *Take and Eat, but a dead Carcass can neither take nor Eat.* I think the Reason very good, and sufficient to abolish that or any other *Tradition*: but now neither Sense nor Reason, nor the very *Letter* of the *Scripture* it self can hold its Ground against *Tradition*, but we may add to it, or take from it, to make it square neatly with our *Tradition*.

I am told ( pray let me know the truth of it ) that the New Separation have shewed a Disposition to revive the Old *Tradition* of Communicating *Infants* in the *Eucharist*; and then they can easily make it *Necessary!* and send us new *Cargoes* from time to time, which we have warning to expect, and we shall never have done, for *Tradition* is a bottonless Well. And if *Tradition* without *Scripture* can make *Necessaries*,  
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it will make our way to Heaven very difficult, as to the Number of *Necessaries*: and very doubtful about the Choice of *Traditions*; for some Churches have left off what others retain, and as the Church of *Rome* her self confesses, it is not three or four Fathers, but the Concurrent Testimony of all the Fathers can be call'd the *Tradition* of the *Church*.

THE necessary and acceptable Worship is in *Spirit* and in *Truth*, the *Flesh*, that is the *Letter*, profiteth nothing, but our jangling is not only about the *Letter*, but the *Circumstances*, the *Fringes*, of that *Letter*, the *Kegay* or *Mixture* of Wine and Water, which is of little Moment, and not mention'd at all in Scripture, yet now is made *Necessary* and *Indispensible*! Thus the *Galatians* turned from the *Spirit* to the *Letter*, they would have the outward Circumcision revived; which *St. Paul* told them availed nothing one way or other, whether they had it or had it not, for it was but the *Letter*, and a *Figure* or *Representation* only of that which was only *Necessary*: And as many as walk according to *THIS* Rule, Peace be on them,  
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and Mercy, and upon the Israel of God, Gal. vi. 15, 16. O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the Truth! the Reality, the One thing Needful; but are careful and troubled about many things which are not Needful, the Shadows and Figures of the *Unum Necessarium*, which is Faith in Christ, and that is Wholly Spiritual, and all Within, tho' it be expressed in outward Representations in the *Flesh*: but having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the *Flesh*? Have ye suffered so Many things in vain? if it be yet in vain, Gal. iii. 1. 3, 4.

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